

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim [[1]]21, wherein the cooling holding unit has positioning portions for generally positioning the sterilized equipment to be held therein.

8. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim [[7]]26, wherein the loading racks have positioning portions for generally positioning the sterilized equipment to be held thereby.

9. (Original) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 7, wherein the positioning portions are endoscope positioning portions for generally positioning endoscopes.

10. (Original) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 8, wherein the positioning portions are lowered portions corresponding to the shape of the sterilized equipment to be held thereby.

11. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim [[1]]21, wherein the cooling holding unit comprises fans for cooling the sterilized equipment to be held therein.

12. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim [[1]]21, wherein the cooling holding unit comprises pairs of fans for cooling the sterilized equipment to be held therein from above and below.

13. (Original) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 11, further comprising loading racks for loading the sterilized equipment, wherein portions of the loading racks facing the fans are formed of a mesh to facilitate passage of air.

14. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim [[1]]21, wherein the cooling holding unit is capable of being opened and closed by means of a door.

15. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim [[1]]21, wherein the drying holding unit is capable of being opened and closed by means of a door.

16. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim [[1]]21, wherein the storage unit is capable of being opened and closed by means of a door.

17. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim [[1]]21, wherein the storage unit is sectioned into storage areas according to the size of the sterilized equipment to be stored therein.

18. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim [[1]]22, wherein the containers for storing the sterilized equipment comprise detachable cooling members having cooling means.

19. (Original) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 18, wherein the cooling members are lids for covering the containers.

20. (Original) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 18, wherein the containers comprise positioning members for generally positioning the sterilized equipment.

21. (Original) A steam sterilization storing device comprising:
a cooling holding unit for holding and cooling sterilized equipment which has been sterilized by hot steam;

a drying holding unit for holding and drying the sterilized equipment; and
a storage unit for holding and storing the sterilized equipment.

22. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 21, wherein the cooling holding unit ~~is capable of holding~~ further comprises containers for storing the sterilized equipment.

23. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 21, wherein the drying holding unit ~~is capable of holding~~ further comprises containers for storing the sterilized equipment.

24. (Currently Amended) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 21, wherein the storage unit ~~is capable of holding~~ further comprises containers for storing the sterilized equipment.

25. (Original) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 21, wherein the cooling holding unit, drying holding unit, and storage unit, are formed in a common unit.

26. (Original) A steam sterilization storing device according to Claim 21, wherein the cooling holding unit comprises loading racks for loading the sterilized equipment.

27. (Withdrawn) A steam sterilization system comprising:
a high-temperature high-pressure steam sterilization device for storing and sterilizing equipment to be sterilized with hot steam;
a transporting device for holding and transporting the sterilized equipment sterilized in the high-temperature high-pressure steam sterilization device; and
a cooling holding unit for holding and cooling sterilized equipment which has been sterilized by the high-temperature high-pressure steam sterilization device.

28. (Withdrawn) A steam sterilization system according to Claim 27, wherein the transporting device is capable of holding and transporting containers storing the sterilized equipment.

29. (Withdrawn) A steam sterilization system according to Claim 27, further comprising a drying holding device for holding and drying the sterilized equipment.

30. (Withdrawn) A steam sterilization system according to Claim 27, further comprising a storage device for holding and storing the sterilized equipment.

31. (Withdrawn) A steam sterilization system according to Claim 27, wherein the transporting device comprises
a hanger member for holding the sterilized equipment; and

a clamp mechanism capable of securing the sterilized equipment against the hanger member by clamping the sterilized equipment in operation with the hanger member to hold the sterilized equipment with the hanger member.

32. (Withdrawn) A steam sterilization system according to Claim 28, wherein the transporting device comprises

a hanger member for holding the container; and

a clamp mechanism capable of securing the container against the hanger member by clamping the sterilized equipment in operation with the hanger member to hold the container with the hanger member.

33. (Withdrawn) A steam sterilization system according to Claim 27, further comprising containers for storing the sterilized equipment, wherein the containers comprise detachable cooling members having air-cooled fans.

34. (Withdrawn) A steam sterilization storing device comprising:

a container storing sterilized equipment following sterilization with hot steam;
and

a lid member, having small fans disposed at predetermined positions, which is attachable to the container.

35. (New) A steam sterilization storing device comprising:

a cooling holding unit that is arranged near a steam sterilization device for medical equipment for sterilizing medical equipment by hot steam for enabling repeated use of the medical equipment for medical procedures and that holds and cools the medical equipment sterilized by the steam sterilization device;

a drying holding unit for holding and drying the sterilized medical equipment;

and

a storage unit for holding and storing the sterilized medical equipment.